

levels of Girl Scouting; corresponding facilitator guides to help the volunteers and other activities to ensure that this program is successful.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS HAS NO RESET BUTTON

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights exactly 61 years ago. This document was born on the ashes of a global war which saw the murder of over six million Jewish people during the Holocaust and the deaths of over 60 million people around the world.

Just when it seemed that humanity was irrevocably lost in the global devastation of this conflict, some of the greatest leaders of their time, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, came together at the United Nations to enshrine a common human bond of individual dreams and aspirations protected by defined rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While formally a resolution, not a treaty, its provisions are part of every legally binding international instrument which sets out to protect human rights.

Today, 61 years after its adoption, the catalog of defined rights has withstood the test of time, but the full implementation of those rights is as elusive as ever. The language and the context in which we discuss these rights today may have changed, but the urgency and importance to protect them globally has not. Terms such as internet freedom, global war on terror, environmental devastation, water-boarding, Guantanamo, corporate social responsibility, food security, women's rights and the Responsibility to Protect are just a few of those modern terms which put in sharp focus the relevance of those rights set forth in this document 61 years ago.

During that period, the United States was a leader among nations in defining and defending those rights and spearheaded international consensus and agreements. More recently, however, we seem to have either forgotten the hard-won lessons of that period or at least have misapplied them.

Instead of holding on tighter to our beliefs and commitments after the 9/11 attacks, we were willing to consider these sacred values impediments to our national sovereignty and infringements on our right to defend our country. Instead of heeding the admonition of one of the greatest American Presidents—another Roosevelt—who led this nation through the Great Depression and defeated the most evil regime in human history, that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself,” we abandoned our human rights commitments at home. Faced with an unknown and secretive enemy, fear drove us to suspend important legal protections, to re-define the meaning of torture, to engage in extraordinary renditions of individuals utilizing poor human rights records of other countries, and we created with Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo monuments to that failed policy that still serve as recruiting tools for extremists all over the world. All the while

we harshly criticized friends and foes alike if they disagreed with us, and set on an international course of democracy promotion, which was of the “either you are with us, or you are against us” nature.

To regain our international standing and reputation, and in recognition of the fact that we can only defeat terrorism with the support of the relevant local populations, we have recently undertaken significant diplomatic efforts to repair our international relationships. We have announced the closure of Guantanamo, and have ruled out enhanced interrogation techniques, have passed hate crimes legislation at home and have joined the Human Rights Council. While important parts of these objectives have yet to be achieved, the American public and the international community have rightfully applauded these important and difficult initiatives.

But while we have made domestic human rights gains, we now stand to lose our human rights bearings abroad. With ambiguous statements and actions the United States has sent signals to repressive regimes that human rights may no longer feature prominently in our foreign relations and that there is the possibility of a “fresh start,” which can be triggered by a magical “reset button.” While I strongly support the direct engagement of repressive regimes around the globe, I am equally convinced that past human rights records cannot be “reset,” or glossed over. The Universal Declaration does not provide for a “reset button” for gross human rights violations, nor do any of the international human rights treaties. Repressive regimes will only seriously engage the United States and the international community on important human rights issues if we take a principled stand, both in public and in private, which is based on accountability. We owe justice to human rights victims, be that in Sudan, Burma, China, North Korea, Russia or anywhere else in the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on December 9, 2009, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall No. 945 and rollcall No. 946. Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 945: “yes”—Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4173) to provide for financial regulatory reform, to protect consumers and investors, to enhance Federal understanding of insurance issues, to regulate the over-the-counter derivatives, markets, and for other purposes

Rollcall No. 946: “yes”—To eliminate an unused lighthouse reservation, provide management consistency by bringing the rocks and small islands along the coast of Orange County, California, and meet the original congressional intent of preserving Orange County's rocks and small islands, and for other purposes

INTRODUCING THE COMMON SENSE TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2009

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer legislation to address the needs of Americans across the country who have been unnecessarily burdened by taxes, entitled “The Common Sense Tax Relief Act of 2009.”

As you all are well aware, Americans are extremely concerned with the current state of the economy and they are looking to their government to foster an economic environment that promotes growth.

At a time when Congress is considering health care and energy bills that will significantly raise taxes on all Americans, we must be cognizant of the fact that overall tax bills keep rising.

Over the past year, unprecedented spending on government programs through the so-called “stimulus bill” and the bloated Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 has produced, at best, modest signs of recovery.

Americans have felt a great deal of uncertainty as their jobs remain in jeopardy and they are unsure as to what additional financial burden will be levied upon them by the federal government.

I represent a state that currently has the highest tax burden in the nation, and to add insult to injury, New Jersey receives the least amount of federal dollars back from Washington per taxpayer.

Every weekend that I am back in my district, I hear from constituents who have had enough with being taxed by a government that has made no effort to follow these constituents lead in getting their financial houses in order.

For this reason, I have offered the Common Sense Tax Relief Act of 2009. This legislation seeks to make permanent several widely supported tax credits that will directly benefit families and small businesses seeking relief, clarity and certainly in their financial planning.

To assist families, this bill will make permanent the child tax credit and the marriage penalty relief tax credit. To assist in the advancement of education, this bill will make permanent the teacher tax deduction, and the tuition deduction. And to assist small business and families seeking to plan their financial futures, the bill makes permanent the current capital gains and dividends tax rates and eliminates the “death tax.”

Madam Speaker, I urge the immediate consideration of this important legislation that will help propel our economy forward and provide significant relief to all of our constituents.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. GREGG HARPER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Mr. HARPER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 3288—Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010.